

**MORDELLISTENA PSEUDOPARVULA ERMISCH
(COL.: MORDELLIDAE) NEW TO BRITAIN**

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M. PSEUDOPARVULA was described by Ermisch (1956) from a single male taken at Boppard, West Germany in 1939. It is recorded as close to *M. parvula* Gyllenhal from which it can be separated by the shape of the side border of the pronotum. The elytral pubescence is described as blackish or dark grey. Figures of the genitalia, however, are not provided.

In the same article, lower down on the same page, Ermisch described *M. parvuloides* apparently from a single female taken at Lucca, Italy. The description implies a close external similarity to *M. pseudoparvula* but with dull yellow or dull red elytral pubescence in place of the dark pubescence described for *M. pseudoparvula*. Again, the description is not accompanied by figures.

Recently, Horák (1996) in the course of revising the Palaearctic species of *Mordellistena* re-examined specimens in the Ermisch collection now in the Staatliches Museum für Tierkunde, Dresden. A summary of his relevant findings is presented here because the article containing his conclusions has proved difficult to obtain.

Horák recorded that the Ermisch collection contains a male *M. pseudoparvula* labelled holotype. He found the latter to be in a dirty state and removal of the dirt revealed a reddish-brown elytral pubescence rather than the dark pubescence ascribed to *M. pseudoparvula* by Ermisch.

Horák found that the collection also holds two specimens, a male and a female, standing as *M. parvuloides*. The female was labelled holotype but the male was not so labelled and, in fact, proved to be a male of *M. bicoloripilosa* Ermisch, 1967. Finding himself unable to establish any external features distinguishing the female, Horák concluded that it was another example of *M. pseudoparvula*. This, together with the apparent absence of a male *M. parvuloides* holotype, lead him to the conclusion that *M. parvuloides* Ermisch, 1956 was a junior synonym of *M. pseudoparvula* Ermisch, 1956.

One problem in accepting this conclusion is the publication of figures, stated to represent the parameres of *M. parvuloides* and different from those provided for *M. pseudoparvula*, in the key provided by Ermisch (1967). Horák does not comment on this. A mis-identification of the male from which the figures were obtained seems a possible explanation. (The male standing as *M. parvuloides* in the Ermisch collection was another species). Batten (1986), too, presents figures of the parameres of *M. parvuloides* but close inspection suggests that his figures are based on those provided by Ermisch (1967). Should a male specimen labelled *M. parvuloides* by Ermisch turn up in future, the status of *M. parvuloides* will have to be re-assessed but until this happens it seems best, on balance, to accept Horák's synonymy.

Among a number of beetles received by the present author from a Malaise trap set near Santon Downham (VC28, West Norfolk) during August 1983 was a male

Mordellistena which, apart from having dull golden elytral pubescence, fitted the description of *M. pseudoparvula* in the key given by Ermisch (1967). At the time, the specimen was submitted to Dr Batten, Middelbourg who returned it as *M. pseudoparvula*. In further confirmation of its identity, the specimen was found to agree well with the description of this species, including the figures for genitalia, provided recently by Horák (1996).

There can thus be little doubt that this beetle is an example of *M. pseudoparvula* Ermisch, 1965, apparently the first example of the species to be recognised in Britain. Publication of the record was held back pending further evidence that the beetle was established here. Confirmation of this is now to hand for my friend Mr A.A. Allen recorded (Allen, 1986) a single female of what was then taken to be *M. parvuloides* from Shooter's Hill (VC16 West Kent) in July 1985. This, in the light of Horák's findings, must now be regarded as the second British specimen of *M. pseudoparvula*. Further records of the species in Britain have been obtained recently by my friend Peter Hodge (Hodge, *in press*).

Acknowledgements

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EDITORIAL NOTE: READERS SURVEY

It is hoped that an analysis of the recent reader survey may be ready in time for a summary to appear in the next issue. Anyone who has not yet returned their completed questionnaire is asked to do so at once.